

MINUTES FOR THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
MEETING AND GREEN TEAM MEETING
Tuesday, September 22, 2020 - 7:30 pm – Virtual Meeting

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Members present: John Lippert, Erica Hernandez, Ron Bjorkland, Michael Hartman, Steve Skolnik, Rhema Bjorkland. Jane Young, Josh Hamlin, Xochitl Zamora-Thompson, Michale Zeliff (7:50). uisa Robles (staff liaison). Visitors: Kevin Driscoll, Tom Taylor, Ben Fischler, Bill Orleans, Excused Absences: Matt Dirksen, Absent: Larry Hilliard, Colin Byrd (council liaison), William Manico.

Call to order:

1. At the August meeting, Green ACES was asked to look at the development plans for the Golden Triangle Office Park at the northeast corner of the intersection of Greenbelt Road and Capital Drive (next to Capital Cadillac). The Applicant, Royal Farms Greenbelt, LLC, submitted a Detailed Site Plan to the City for review. The Detailed Site Plan (DSP) proposes the development of a 4,649 square foot food & beverage store, a gas station, and a separate 4,368 square foot commercial building.

John Lippert shared the recommendations to send to Council. In addition to all the planning staff recommendations, Green ACES would like to add that they include EV charging stations, solar panels, night sky compliant lights; or, even better a No-build option. Green ACES/Team feels there is no need for another gas station.

Members made comments and voiced concerns. Among them: to put give the no-build option more prominence. To plant trees that are as old as possible (not skinny saplings). Comments were made on the “no-build” term, whether to use it at all, or include it.

Green ACES / Green Team discussed the proposed project and strongly recommends the “no build” option. If the project goes forward, we concur with City Staff recommendations, and Green ACES / Green Team recommends stricter requirements, as described below.

1. A second commercial building should not be developed. Green ACES / Green Team is in agreement with not prepping or building the second commercial building as that would deplete a large area of trees that are now 50 years old.
2. Require installation of roof-mounted solar photovoltaic energy systems (PVES) for all buildings, including the fueling canopy. It is a glaring omission that the design does not specify renewable energy systems, which improve the environment and provide economic benefit to the owner.
3. Require installation of electric vehicle service equipment (EVSE) for fueling of electric vehicles. Provide a minimum of three (3) level III (DC fast charger, CCS connector), and three (3) level II chargers (240-volt AC, standard J-1772 connector) with parking spaces specifically marked for EV charging only. Tesla and CHAdeMO connectors may be provided as optional equipment. Tesla-specific EVSE equipment is not recommended, since these cannot readily be utilized by other EV brands and therefore limit usefulness. (Note: Tesla EVs are able to utilize any EVSE by using an inexpensive cable adapter.)
4. The Tree Conservation Plan shows clearing of all trees fronting Greenbelt Road under a separate permit and planting a landscape strip of 5 shade trees, 20 ornamental trees, and 150 shrubs. The area between Greenbelt Road and the proposed one-way drive aisle should act as a “green area/buffer area” and keep the existing tree cover with proposed landscaping.
5. The project proposes to cut down all the trees on the site. Replanting should be done with native trees that are as mature as possible.
6. Staff and Green ACES are also concerned about stormwater run-off, including impact on Still Creek and Greenbelt National Park, and this issue needs to be further investigated. Further review of the project should include pending comments from Greenbelt National Park staff and completion of further study by City Staff on the stormwater runoff issue.
7. Another primary issue of concern is traffic safety. Traffic traveling (west) along Rt. 193 moves at a rather fast pace, especially that which intends to take the turn onto Kenilworth Ave. and onward to a connection with I-495. Currently, there is a cut-through in the center median directly across from the proposed exit. While this is little used at this point, an increase in traffic on this exit road may facilitate left turns onto Rt. 193 (eastbound) across the 4 lanes of fast-moving traffic and risk an unacceptable potential increase in vehicular collisions. Staff needs to investigate this issue further.
8. The project proposes installing 4 bicycle racks within the site. Bicycle lanes also should be installed on Capitol Drive to further facilitate bicycle access to the site.
9. A double driveway off Capital Drive is proposed. A better option is a single driveway with internal channelization that directs drivers to the second commercial building, if developed.
10. Staff recommends that lighting on the site be of a type and quality intended to prevent spillover lighting effects. Green ACES / Green Team further recommends Dark-Sky-compliant lighting.
11. Royal Farms representatives stated that the firm utilizes Green Building Practices. The Applicant should provide specifics of what and how green building practices will be utilized.

12. This site was designated a Historic Resource in the 2013 Approved Greenbelt Metro Area and MD 193 Corridor Sector Plan and is being evaluated for Historic Site status at the September 15, 2020 Historic Preservation Commission meeting. The Applicant should work with Planning Staff, the Greenbelt Museum Coordinator, and County Historic Preservation Staff on an interpretive panel for the Toaping Castle Site.

13. The one area that was not discussed by Staff is not developing the site. Green ACES / Green Team brought up the fact that there are many gas stations situated nearby on Greenbelt Road and that this project is not necessary. The Royal Farms representatives responded that this would be the only modern gas station and convenience store in Greenbelt. This project proposes to remove all the existing trees from the site, damaging wildlife and adversely impacting stormwater runoff from the site. It presents traffic safety concerns. Green ACES / Green Team believes there is no real need for this project and strongly recommends against this project as being in the best overall interest of the City.

2. Updates from Sustainability Framework / Green Team Circles.

1. **Energy / Solar Circle.** A) Food Coop panels are being installed now. County permits were hard to get. Now connecting with Pepco will be the next challenge. Interesting racking system, back to back panels no spaces in between. B) City's Solar farm is moving forward but in an early stage of development. Needs about 7 acres in south PGC near the WSSC site. Operational on spring of 2022. C) GHI does not have a County permit for this project 60kw for the admin building, some on the roof and some ground mounted. Energy: pilot program with water heaters CO2 (instead of Freon), in GHI. Some were installed, anecdotally, members feel no difference and the electric consumption is 1/3 of the energy used before! But they need a lot of space to "breathe" but might be able to duct to the outside. Right now only for masonry homes since other homes don't have the space.
2. **Food Systems / Sustainable Land care Circle.**
3. **Green Building.**
4. **Land Use / Planning - Pathways of Sustainability Circle.** Bee City USA. Xochitl wants to be part of the group. Susan Barnett has a Green Team Circle called "Butterfly Brigade" that can be a part of it too.
5. **Transportation.**
 - a. Electric Vehicles. In GHI it is problematic to add chargers because of the load, and the space.
 - b. MagLev discussion.
6. **Local Economies - Time Bank Circle.** Bi monthly meetings going on. Exchanges going on.
7. **Waste Management / Zero Waste Circle.** Worm castings were put on the NDC auction and they all sold. Plus more were sold separately. Tom Taylor mentioned that Kevin Driscoll posted the ZW Event Guide on the website. It is now ready for everyone to use. People working with the COOP to encourage reusable bags, etc. Trex works with some grocery stores. Luisa will write an article for the News Review. The COOP cannot comply with Trex's requirements to participate with them.
8. **Water / Stream - Stormwater Restoration – Watershed Circle.**

3. Events, other

Next ZW meeting on November 17

Adjournment: 9:22 pm